

The Christian Life.

A PRAYER 230 YEARS OLD.

O! that mine eyes might closed be
To what concerns me not to see;
That deafness might possess mine ear
To what concerns me not to hear;
That truth my tongue might always tie
From ever speaking foolishly;
That no vain thought might ever rest,
Or be conceived in my breast
That by each deed and word and thought,
Glory may to my God be brought!
But what are wishes? Lord, mine eye
On Thee is fixed, to Thee I cry;
Wash, Lord, and purify my heart,
And make it clean in every part;
And when 'tis clean, Lord keep it, too,
For that is more than I can do.

—Thomas Elmwood, 1639, A. D.

"GOD CLAIMS ME."

When the late Earl Cairns was a little boy he heard three words which made a memorable impression upon him: "God claims you." Then came the question: "What am I going to do with the claim?" He answered: "I will own it and give myself to God." He went home and told his mother: "God claims me." At school and college his motto was: "God claims me." As a member of Parliament and ultimately as Lord Chancellor it was still: "God claims me." When he was appointed Lord Chancellor he was a teacher of a large Bible class, and his minister, thinking he would have no time to devote to that purpose, said to him: "I suppose you will now require to give up your class?" "No," was the reply, "I will not; God claims me."—*The Dial of Progress.*

"WHAT DOEST THOU HERE?"

How often is that question put still! When a Christian worker, sorely needed, deserts his post because of some unseen difficulty, or for some selfish gratification and ease, to that couch of indolence, or to that forest glade where soft breezes blow, the question comes, "What doest thou here?" When a child of God is found in the theater, the dancing saloon, or the place of evil companionship, sitting in the seat of scorners, or walking in the way of the ungodly, again must the question come as a thunderbolt out of a clear sky, "What doest thou here?" When one endowed with great faculties digs a hole in the earth and buries the God-intrusted talent, standing idle all the day long among the loungers in the market place, again must the inquiry ring out, "What doest thou here?"

Life is the time for doing. The world is a great workshop in which there is no room for drones. God himself worketh as the great Master builder. All creatures

fulfill their needful functions, from the angel that hymns God's praise to the wasp that buries a corpse. There is plenty to do—evil to put down, good to build up, doubters to be directed, prodigals to be won back, sinners to be sought. What doest thou here? Up, Christians, leave your caves, and do! Do not do in order to be saved; but, being saved, Do!—*F. B. Meyer.*

THE GAIN OF SOULS.

The Greeks were the Yankees of the Orient. Though they despised foreigners, they visited every coast and every port of the Mediterranean and exiled themselves from their motherland to buy and sell and get gain. The modern Greek who controls the fruit trade of Chicago is but patterning after his ancestors. The Jew with the same spirit of commercial enterprise we see in him to-day, followed in his footsteps and outdid him in the strife for gain.

Paul took that grasping, scheming word, *kerdos*—gain, that word that might be pictured with hooked beak and crooked talons, and transfigured it into the expression of the purpose of a life, poring over the treasure of souls won back to God, with an eagerness as intense as that of a miser over his gathering hoard of gold. "And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are without law, as without law; that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."

When, in our humbler sphere, and with our more limited opportunities, we have that master passion for the gain of souls, to which all else must bend, we, too, will mind the apostle's injunction, "So run that ye may obtain."—*Albert B. Judson, New York Observer.*

All life is serious. We are not butterflies to flutter a little while in the air and then drop into the dust. The words we speak and the things we do are not snowflakes dropping into the water, "a moment white, then gone forever," but are beginnings of immortalities. We are not done with anything in life as it passes from our hands. Nothing is indifferent. There is a moral character in all that we do. Either we are blessing the world, or sowing the seed of a curse in every influence that goes out from us. It becomes us, therefore, to give conscientious thought to all our life.—*Forward.*

Speak only what you would like God to hear.

IN THE SHADOW OF HIS WINGS.

One of the most touching words our Savior spoke was when, weeping over Jerusalem, he said, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." The expression calls up pictures of helplessness, sympathy, affection, solicitude, love. How safe are the little brood when the hen has gathered her chickens under her wings! How free from all concern and fear! And thus the Lord would make us safe in his presence, and under his protection, if we would but confide in him.

The hen may gather her chickens under her wings, and may perish with them. She may be unable to protect them, however willing she may be to give her life for her helpless brood; but there is no weakness, no helplessness in Him. The powers and resources of the universe are at his command. Under the shadow of his wings, what can disturb our sure repose? Who can harm us when the great and mighty God is our refuge and our trust?

We who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and have known something of the love "which passeth knowledge," may bid adieu to fears and doubts and uncertainties and anxieties, under the shadow of his wings. We know he has the will to help us, and we know he has the power; we know that whatever man may say or do, he is able to do for us "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." He can protect us from every foe; he can deliver us from every danger; he can shelter us from every storm; he can hide us from every assault. No weapon formed against us shall prosper while he protects and defends; no power of man or devil can shake our sure repose or drive us from our refuge in the Lord who is our rock.

"Jesus protects; my fears, be gone!
What can the Rock of Ages move?
Safe in thy arms I lay me down,
Thy everlasting arms of love.

"While thou art intimately nigh,
Who, who shall violate my rest?
Sin, earth, and hell I now defy;
I lean upon my Saviour's breast.

"I rest beneath the Almighty's shade:
My griefs expire, my troubles cease:
Thou Lord, on whom my soul is stayed,
Wilt keep me still in perfect peace."

—*The Christian.*

"Christ's death is the supreme manifestation of love; Christ's burial the supreme manifestation of sympathy; Christ's resurrection the supreme manifestation of power.

Tale-bearers, like industrious teamsters, are best satisfied when they have a load each way.—*Neel.*